

Fourth of July Recipe: Beef Sirloin Kabobs with Roasted Red Pepper Dipping Sauce

- INGREDIENTS
- 1-1/2 pounds beef Top Sirloin Steak boneless, cut 1 inch thick

2 jars (7 ounces each) roasted red peppers, rinsed, drained, finely chopped

2 teaspoons coarse grind black pepper

3/4 teaspoon salt

3/4 teaspoon sweet paprika

2 cloves garlic, minced

Dipping Sauce:

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced

2 jars (7 ounces each) roasted red peppers, rinsed, drained, finely chopped

1/2 cup dry white wine

2 tablespoons tomato paste

3/4 teaspoon dried thyme leaves, crushed or 2 teaspoons minced fresh thyme

1 cup ready-to-serve beef broth

2 teaspoons cornstarch



Arizona State Land  
Department

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July 1, 2013

Volumel, Issue 3

Arizona State Land  
Department

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NRCD NEWSLETTER

Growing a Nation: in Celebration of the 4th of July

On the dawn of our nation’s birthday when firecrackers and smells of BBQ fill the air and children run around with sticky hands dripping of watermelon most people will be celebrating the bravery and courage of past patriots. They overcame great odds against the powerful British Empire and their actions should be honored. However, early colonists and patriots also overcame a struggle to survive, and without agriculture, learning to adapt, and hard work the early colonies would have never endured. As agriculturalists we should be celebrating the impact

our vocation and determination of early colonists has had on our country. Without the three sister crops and the help of Native Americans, we might not be here. Our country was founded by agriculturalists and since then agriculture been a source of economic strength, weakness, and foreign policy diplomacy. American Agriculture has seen many changes from humble beginnings, the Industrial Revolution, two world wars, the Depression and Dust Bowl, mechanization, large scale farming, scientific discoveries, and

the sustainability trend. From its humble colony starving beginnings to the world’s number one food exporter, American agriculture and producers have endured and progressed in ways that deserve acknowledgement. So when the little ones in your family are crunching on watermelon rinds this Fourth of July remind them of our country’s agricultural foundation and the significance it has had in growing a sovereign nation.



AZ Ag Facts!

- Arizona has 15,400 farms and ranches throughout the state.
- Arizona produces enough beef annually to feed over 4.6 million Americans.
- Yuma, Arizona is the winter lettuce capital of the world.
- Arizona has a \$12.4 billion agricultural industry.
- One of the finest extra-long staple (ELS) cottons was developed and grown right here in Arizona.
- Source: AZ Farm Bureau

On the Road Again

- This quarter in AZ NRCD travels I was able to attend the Navajo County NRCD Local Work Group Meeting, a Santa Cruz NRCD meeting, the State Technical Committee Meeting, be an AZ Envirothon judge, go to a Verde Education Center event, attend the Fredonia and Littlefield-Hurricane Valley joint NRCD meeting and the Willcox-San Simon Local Work Group Meeting. I am looking forward to meeting the rest of you! Best, Amber, NRCD Manger.

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## Message from: Curtis Elke, Acting State NRCS Conservationist

Thanks to many of you, I have acquired friendships and partner relationships while here and which will follow me all the way back to South Dakota.



There are great projects going on in Arizona because of collaboration. As I traveled Arizona these past four months visiting various NRCS field offices and area offices, large parts of Indian Country and col-

laboration with several partners of NRCS-Arizona along the way, I was able to observe the opportunities available on the landscape, people's desire to do what is right for the land, positive attitudes, strong partnerships, continued interest from potential partners, and all the conservation already being implemented across the landscape. "Our working together effectively utilizing each ones skills and talents, and enjoyment working together is getting the job done well!"



My initial observation is that Arizona is extremely rich in culture, diversity and unique landforms.

While there I was able to meet with federally recognized Tribes and their Council members to share my experiences from other states and hear their ideas and solutions for a better tomorrow. I also personally visited Arizona Conservation District Boards, Arizona Tribal Conservation District Boards, many federal, state

and, local government partners, the USDA under Secretary of Agriculture and Deputy under Secretary of Agriculture, who personally made a visit to Arizona, and many other agriculture interest groups.

While meeting internal and external partners, I was given the rare opportunity to speak loud for Arizona NRCS and the importance of strong partnerships, challenges and barriers we face together, and success stories resulting from working together. Both Secretaries and other partners have expressed their appreciation in how well Arizona is working together and the positive outcomes associated. With strong partnership come responsibilities as well. It is NRCS duty to make sure we do our part in communicating with transparency in mind. We need to know each other's business well enough to become effective together. Together we are stronger!

There are many opportunities to make something good even better. From climate related challenges to budget related challenges, I believe together we will become victors through challenging times. As we continue to work hard together making the right decisions for Arizona, I can assure you that Arizona NRCS staff continue to focus on getting successful conservation planned and implemented, while striving for excellent internal and external customer service.

It was quite a change from South Dakota to Arizona in many aspects. It took me a while to adjust to every day sunshine, the time change, water resource challenges, Nation to Nation methodologies, dry land farming traditions and techniques, open range grazing, to irrigation water management. I have been blessed with a great experience and have learned much from many of you. Being new to Arizona and obtaining all the experiences you have given me as your acting State Conservationist makes me think I have obtained a degree in Arizona culture. That is Priceless! Thank you. What a great state you have to be proud of!

My last day as acting State Conservationist in Arizona was Friday, May 31<sup>st</sup> and again I want to thank all of you for making me feel very welcome and like part of the Arizona family. I wish all of you the very, very best!

*Curtis Elke, Acting State Conservationist, AZ NRCS and Assistant State Conservationist Field Operations, SD NRCS*

## Public Settings for Meetings

Arizona statute does not define a public setting requirement for meeting places. A.R.S. 38-431.01 A. simply states that all meetings of any public body shall be public meetings and all persons so desiring shall be permitted to attend and listen to the deliberations and proceedings.

Without specific statutory language, there is a high risk

of inciting Open Meeting Law complaints if meetings are held in settings where an individual might feel like access is limited or they are not welcome. Because of this, as the NRCD Manager, I asked the Arizona Ombudsman's Office for recommendations to share with all of the NRCDs.

A few examples of places to avoid holding meetings are

private residences, businesses, and offices; hotel rooms; and churches. Meetings of public bodies should promote an open and welcome tone. Good public perception is key to avoiding Open Meeting Law complaints regarding public access.



## An Interview with AZ's Longest Serving NRCD Supervisor

John Olsen of the Chino-Winds NRCD moved from Colorado to Arizona in 1951. He purchased three sections of land in Yavapai County to produce cattle and livestock feed. In 1953 John cultivated his first conservation partnership with the Soil and Conservation Service (SCS); he needed assistance with engineering for flood irrigation, land leveling, and to implement cement linings in irrigation ditches. At that time it was a requirement to sign up as a cooperator of the NRCD in order to receive SCS conservation assistance, so becoming a member of the Chino-Winds NRCD was a natural.

It wasn't long after becoming a board member that

John was elected chairman. He understood the need for local conservation and how important the partnership between the NRCDs and the SCS was to improve the land. Therefore, John also became involved in the Arizona Association of Natural Resource Conservation Districts; during his tenure he served as a delegate to the National Association of Conservation Districts. A highlight of his time as a delegate was being involved in and aware of agricultural conservation on a national level and working with farmers and ranchers. When asked what the most important thing is that the NRCDs offer the public today John's answer was the Education Centers.

Farming has become nonexistent in most people's lives today, but it's significant to all of us. The NRCD sponsored Education Centers offer a way for students who know very little about agriculture and conservation practices to learn basics through hands on education. Agriculture education is highly important to John because he believes that maintaining productivity of the land equals sustainability, and something that few people can appreciate. Implementing and sharing this message is what the NRCDs try to do, and a large part of the reason why John has served as chair of the Chino-Winds NRCD since 1953.

"maintaining productivity of the land equals sustainability"